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BY

E. S. P. HAYNES

Author of "Early Victorian and other Papers," etc.



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1918

PERSONALIA

TO THE MEMORY OF
RUPERT AND ALFRED BROOKE

PREFACE

I HAVE dedicated this rather retrospective little volume to Rupert and Alfred Brooke because the loss of them is curiously typical of all that the world has lost by the war. Neither of them could have tolerated a Prussian Europe, or, I hasten to add, a Prussianized England. Both would have lived as loyally as they died for all that they held dear. Yet at least one of their friends is not so much inclined as the world at large to acquiesce in their deaths as a means of edification. But for the prostration of certain politicians, past and present, before the Prussia they so ardently admired, Rupert and Alfred Brooke would have enriched the best life and thought of England for years to come. If a dozen politicians in Europe had exerted half the energy of the late Mr. Stead in bringing the war party of modern Germany to their senses, the world would not now be such a spectacle as to make many of us regret that our planet cannot be mercifully annihilated.

Surely no new world can be worth the appalling sacrifice that we have seen of all that makes life worth living.

All that the survivors can do is never to forget the real aims of those who gave their lives to repair the ghastly negligences and ignorances of European diplomacy. Rupert Brooke, for example, was not first and foremost what is in these days called a "war poet." He was no less enthusiastic than F. H. Keeling in the cause of social justice. He "would have disliked being remembered as a mixture of Lord Tennyson and General Gordon," if I may quote what one of his friends wrote not long after he died. His outlook on life was never turbid or histrionic as was so much of the Victorian sentiment that almost transformed Tennyson and Gordon into the similitude of the Albert Memorial, even if it stopped just short of the figures in the Sieges Allee. The same considerations apply to Alfred Brooke, whose memory, being less public, is at least safe with his friends. Nevertheless he, too, sacrificed a life of joy and promise to the exigencies of a disaster which he felt ought never to have been allowed to happen; and his friends may not unnaturally resent the suggestion, dear to recruiting politicians and other admirers of Scott's Wardour Street feudalism, that to be prematurely assassinated by some Teutonic ruffian is in itself so illustrious a destiny

as to extinguish all regrets for what might have been.

Perhaps the only justification for publishing a collection of old essays ranging over the last fifteen years is the fear of interesting documents like the Nicolas letters being any day obliterated by some stray manifestation of the *Kultur* which has given our army and navy so many "crowded hours of glorious life" and proclaimed to the sensual world that no Hohenzollern will tolerate "an age without a name." If we are to welcome *Kultur* as a school of heroism then let us promote railway accidents, shipwreck, arson, and earthquakes. If not, let us discard all the common cant about war.

Most of the following essays have appeared in the *Cornhill*, *New Witness*, and *English Review*. Three of them have not seen the light before. The essay on Continental England was prophetic in 1915, when it was written, though it seems at this date an inadequate summary of all the measures that have been taken to assimilate Great Britain to the Continent, especially as regards bureaucracy and landscapes. I must thank Mr. Ingpen for scholarly assistance and footnotes.

St. John's Wood.

December, 1917.

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IN December, 1898, Professor Morgan, a friend and contemporary of mine at Balliol, brought an interesting compatriot of his to my rooms from Lincoln. Edward Thomas was then, as always, tall and thin. He had what another friend has described as a "golden brown face" and deep blue eyes which sometimes became suddenly translucent and alert with interest. His voice was a singularly melodious tenor. He sang and read aloud very well. I have never heard so delightful a rendering of Jane Austen's novels or Gibbon's chapters

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on Christianity as he once gave me when I was ill. His talk was incomparable. It was full of such remarks as that which I cull at random from his little volume "Rest and Unrest" about a Welsh farmer: "He seemed to regard the pig as a kind of brother who sacrificed himself for the good of others almost willingly out of consideration for the expensive food which had fattened him; and until the day of the knife he was treated as a brother seldom is." But he was as reticent as he was responsive. He went through life up to the time of entering the Army with an ever-recurring fear that he was not wanted, and was therefore all the more cordial when he met anyone who made it clear that his talk and his work were in demand.

From our first meeting we were intimate friends, though in later life often separated by accidents of time and place. I may perhaps be excused for dwelling more on his personality than on his work, because

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there are others far more competent than I to deal with his books. In early life we both dutifully reviewed each other's books in various periodicals ; but we always frankly expressed a decided preference for each other's conversation. His books remain, but he himself has gone ; and reading them is, as Fitzjames Stephen once pointed out, a poor consolation for the friends and family of a deceased author.

Edward Thomas was born on March 3rd, 1878. He was the son of a civil servant now well known in Positivist circles, and himself a writer concerning the religion of Humanity. At St. Paul's School he belonged to a special class for the study of history and literature. Mr. Bentley and Mr. G. K. Chesterton were both members of it. At the age of seventeen he made the acquaintance of his future father-in-law, James Ashcroft Noble. Mr. Noble encouraged him to give up the Civil Service and devote himself entirely to literary work. He wrote

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a number of articles on what is vaguely called "Nature" for the *Speaker*, the *Globe*, and other papers, which were finally published under the title of "The Woodland Life" in 1897. The book is full of curious and delicate observation in a style which has since been extensively imitated, and the English is characteristically flawless.

In these early years he was "living that deep, beneficent, unconscious life which is what, after all, we remember with most satisfaction, and learn, often too late, to label happiness when the pleasures have all fallen away," as he writes in "Rest and Unrest." This life he recovered to some extent after joining the Army. At the age of nineteen he obtained a scholarship at Lincoln College, and read History under the tuition of Mr. Owen Edwards, for whom he had a deep regard and to whom he dedicated his second book, "*Horæ Solitariae*." His life at Oxford was, on the whole, happy

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and unruffled, and there perhaps for the first time he became thoroughly interested in his contemporaries.

He was always hyperæsthetic as regards impressions, and the beauty of Oxford sank deeply into him. I find a letter of his dated July 25th, 1899, about an afternoon visit to Eton, in which he writes of "the most perfect memory scenes I ever knew, enclosed in a silence broken only by the sound of the wings of doves among all the peaks and ridges of mellow red tile as we looked out from the gallery of the Hall. . . . I expect there will be fragments of Eton in all my landscapes for months."

"*Horæ Solitariae*" is a collection of essays that distils many of these impressions as in the lovely passage about the Welsh hills at night. There is also a great deal of quiet humour and pleasant discourse on old books. The book on Oxford (of which I possess the MS.)* never got its proper appreciation.

* I have now presented it to Lincoln College library.

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It is full of good things like the following about the Magdalen choir: "When one sang alone it was as it had been a dove floating to the windows and away, away. There were parts of the music so faint and so exquisitely blended that the twenty voices were but as the sound of a reverberating bell. A voice of baser metal read the lesson with a melancholy dignity which made the words at once pleasing and unintelligible." My copy is annotated with names. Here, for instance, is a description of Belloc at the Union: "A stiff, small, heroic figure—with a mouth that might sway armies, a voice as sweet as Helicon, as irresistible and continuous as Niagara"; or again of Raymond Asquith as one "who would rather spend a life in deciding between the Greek and Roman ideals than in ruling Parliament and being ruled by society. He strode like a Plantagenet. When he stood still he was like a classical Hermes."

The book is full of miscellaneous reading

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and learning, and contains various extracts from Belloc's first volume of sonnets and "Lambkin's Remains," works much treasured by us both at a time when the rest of the world read nothing of his but "Danton" and "The Bad Child's Book of Beasts." No other book of Thomas's contains so happy a blend of humour, a sense of beauty, and antiquarian learning as this on Oxford.

While at Oxford he married Helen, daughter of his old friend and literary sponsor, James Ashcroft Noble, and after taking his degree he settled in a little house at Earlsfield which he describes inimitably in "*Horæ Solitariae*." The next fifteen years were marred by the struggle for existence. His inveterate shyness and lack of "push and go" were grave handicaps. What he wanted was a literary director to find out what he could do and induce others to give him the work in question. He could not make up his mind to lecturing of any

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kind, and of other work he felt himself incapable. He was extremely conscientious, and in later life gave up a comfortable temporary job for the Government because he felt there was not enough for him to do in it. Consequently he wrote a series of books on different subjects, which often fatigued him before he had achieved the tale of one hundred thousand words deemed essential in a trade which imagines that the public demand for a book is regulated more by quantity than quality.

The remuneration for this work was sadly reduced after the ingenious discovery by an enterprising firm of publishers that the leisure of moderately educated spinsters who liked to appear in print could be exploited to produce any number of books on a variety of topics. I do not suggest that the *res angusta domi* embittered his life, which he would always have desired to be simple in a sense different from what the "simple life" meant before 1914. But

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the necessity of having to write to order probably took some zest out of his writing, even when he was engaged on such congenial subjects as Jefferies, Borrow, or "Beautiful Wales."

He never agreed with me ; but I always considered his criticism the best part of his literary work. He was perhaps the best critic of contemporary poetry in his time. His learning was as profound as his taste was unerring. As regards prose, his book on "Walter Pater" is the best on the subject. One sentence alone shows a wonderful sense of what makes for style : "Only when a word has become necessary to him can a man use it safely ; if he try to impress words by force on a sudden occasion, they will either perish of his violence or betray him." The book was a failure because the British public does not want judicial criticism. To the literary snob Pater was a fetish, and fetishes are not meant to be the subject of intelligent discussion.

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Much the same drawback applied to Thomas's deep and sympathetic interest in human beings as such. He chose types which do not excite general interest. Our urban population likes to read of dukes and Prime Ministers and millionaires, with a female complement of duchesses and adventuresses. An intensive study of Welsh farmers and rustic milkmaids and tramps excites but little curiosity. And Thomas perhaps felt that there was not so much demand for his writing as it deserved, without realizing that in this imperfect world a man has often to begin by creating a demand for himself. All this, however, aggravated a natural melancholy of temperament, which was not cured by various abstinences either from meat or drink or tobacco. His health suffered much as Shelley's did when removed from the robust influence of Peacock.

Yet this melancholy would instantaneously disappear in congenial company on

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a holiday. There is one perfect memory of walks over the Sussex downs on two sunny days at the end of the year 1910, which ended in a little *festa* with the Belloc family and the singing of many of the songs in which he delighted on the road to London. The "Pocket-book of Poems and Songs for the Open Air," which Thomas compiled in 1907, is about the best anthology of its kind. "I have gathered into it," he writes, "much of the finest English poetry, and that poetry at its best can hardly avoid the open air. With this is some humbler poetry which is related to the finest as the grass is to the stars ; between the two I have often found it hard to choose. I have added about sixty of the sweetest songs which it seemed that a wise man would care to sing, or hear sung, in the fields, at the inn, on the road at dawn or nightfall, or at home." Looking at it again one finds a poem of Walter de la Mare curiously appropriate now, "Keep Innocency," and

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the last two lines of his favourite Cornish epitaph :

“ Long is his score who lingers out the day ;
Who goes the soonest has the least to pay.”

After the war broke out he wrote an interesting biography of the Duke of Marlborough. It shows less sign of fatigue than some of his other books. He also brought out an admirable little anthology from the work of English writers entitled “ This England.” He “ wished to make a book as full of English character and country as an egg is full of meat,” and certainly succeeded. Readers of *The English Review* will remember him as a not infrequent contributor : his beautiful essay called “ July,” and his articles on street talk in the first months of the war, and on Rupert Brooke, on Swansea, etc., were full of keen and judicial observation.

Of all those who have lost their lives in

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this war he had the most vivid and sensitive image in his brain of what he was fighting for. As Mr. Seccombe has written : " It was the life of one who knew and loved England, its inhabitants and writers, old and new, better than any man I ever came across." His life in the Army cured his neurasthenia. He could no longer feel at any moment that he was not wanted. For the first time he felt that certain prosaic things had got to be done at regular hours. He had no leisure for experiments in diet. Although he gave a superficial impression of passivity, I had always noticed that in an emergency he acted promptly and wisely, and this quality now came into function.

At this time, too, he began to write verse under the name of Edward Eastaway, which has been much praised by the critics. I do not profess to understand the scansion of modern verse, but the following poem cannot fail to appeal to the most antiquated reader :

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The Bridge.

- “ I have come a long way to-day :
On a strange bridge alone,
Remembering friends, old friends,
I rest without smile or moan,
As they remember me without smile or moan.
- “ All are behind, the kind
And the unkind, too, no more
To-night than a dream. The stream
Runs softly yet drowns the Past,
The dark-lit stream has drowned the Future and
the Past.
- “ No traveller has rest more blest
Than this moment brief between
Two lives, when the Night's first lights
And shades hide what has never been,
Things goodlier, lovelier, dearer than will be or
have been.”

That is exactly the mood of a man who has walked all day and gained the mental repose that comes in the evening, and which came to Edward Thomas in the last years of his life ; and it may be remembered that he never talked so well as when walking with his

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elastic, long stride. One may think of his talk as of the lute in Shelley's poem on "The Woodman and the Nightingale":

"Wakening the leaves and waves, ere it has past
To such brief unison as on the brain
One tone, which never can recur, has cast,
One accent never to return again."

The last lines of all have an even deeper significance for us to-day than when they were written in 1818:

"The world is full of Woodmen who expel
Love's gentle Dryads from the haunts of life,
And vex the nightingales in every dell."

The hatred of the woodman against the wood which sheltered the nightingale has destroyed the youth of our world, to say nothing of its beauties in nature and in art. Edward Thomas died instantaneously in the knowledge that all was well with the cause for which he was fighting. The

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following account of him was sent by his commanding officer to his widow, and may here be reproduced :

“ I cannot express to you adequately in words how deep our sympathy is for you and your children in your great loss. These things go too deep for mere words. We, officers and men, all mourn our own loss. Your husband was very greatly loved in this Battery, and his going has been a personal loss to each of us. He was rather older than most of the officers, and we all looked up to him as the kind of father of our happy family. He was always the same, quietly cheerful and ready to do any job that was going with the same steadfast, unassuming spirit.

“ The day before his death we were rather heavily shelled, and he had a very narrow shave, but he went about his work quite quietly and ordinarily, as if nothing was happening,

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“ I wish I could convey to you the picture of him, a picture we had all learnt to love— of the old clay pipe, gum boots, oilskin coat, and steel helmet.

“ With regard to his actual death you have probably heard the details. It should be of some comfort to you to know that he died at a moment of victory from a direct hit by a shell, which must have killed him outright without giving him a chance to realize anything, a gallant death for a very true and gallant gentleman. We buried him in a little military cemetery a few hundred yards from the Battery; the exact spot will be notified you by the parson. As we stood by his grave the sun came and the guns round seemed to stop firing for a short time. This typified to me what stood out most in your husband’s character, the spirit of quiet, sunny, unassuming cheerfulness.”

More need not be said. Edward Thomas

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detested any suspicion of the histrionic. His last wish was that his work should stand or fall on its own merits without reference to his military service, whether he returned from it or not. His best epitaph was written by George Herbert :

“ Only a sweet and vertuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives ;
But though the whole world turn to coal
Then chiefly lives.”

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GEORGE FREDERICK POLLOCK, formerly senior Master of the King's Bench and King's Remembrancer, was born on June 1st, 1821, and died on May 20th, 1915, just before his ninety-fourth birthday. His faculties, his interests, and his affections remained as fresh as ever up to the last. Apart from his unusual personal charm as a human being, his range of reminiscences was extraordinary, not only by reason of his great age and retentive memory, but also of his native and characteristic versatility. I often urged him to collect them, and indeed a publisher offered to send a shorthand writer for as long as was necessary to dictate a volume. But he said that

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what he wanted was a "Boswell," and even if such a prodigy had been found, George Pollock would most probably have been too tired or bored to go on for many days continuously.

In more recent years I made notes of most conversations that I had with him; but I fear that a full harvest could only have been achieved by everyone following my example, and even my own jottings were sadly casual.

I remember being startled by his remarking one day how delighted he was to see G.R. on the mail-carts. It made him feel "quite a boy again." He had not seen any of the Georges, but had been astonished, walking down Whitehall as a youth, to see a genial gentleman suddenly look out of his carriage window and put out his tongue. This turned out to be His Majesty King William IV., who wished to indicate to some old naval friends on the pavement, that his elevation to the throne had not

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made him too proud. No wonder that my eldest daughter, on being taken to see him, promptly asked him for his impressions of the execution of Charles I., and was sadly disappointed to find that her great-great-uncle had not attended the ceremony.

George Pollock was no mere lawyer. He was, as his father, the Chief Baron, used proudly to announce to his friends, a first-rate mechanic, and had made a complete study and hobby of clocks and watches.* The family watches were always chosen by him and are still going as no other watches go, though they were always a little erratic at first. His accurate observation was never at fault, as when he took up a silver teapot at a wedding reception from among the presents and remarked that it had a hole in it. He told me that when he was leaving Wimbledon he saw his old plumber and

* He chose the clock which now stands in the smoking-room of the Athenæum.

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said, "I wish you could explain how it was that I always had to get my pipes put right once a year until ten years ago, when you were too busy and I had to attend to them myself, since when they have never gone wrong." The plumber smiled significantly and replied, "Well, sir, we must live somehow." Members of the family who had mishaps with bicycles, used to find that the mere mention of the name of Pollock evoked kindly welcome and sometimes even an offer to repair the machine free of charge. This was no doubt partly due to his own ungrudging benevolence. In an age when we are all being exhorted to economise it is refreshing to remember that an official in the Law Courts not so very long ago penetrated a large crowd on a London pavement and discovered George Pollock extended over a grating from which he was trying with an umbrella to extract a penny, which an urchin in tears professed to have dropped down the abyss.

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He was a well-known arbitrator in patent cases. He had some knowledge of astronomy, and counted Sir George Airey and Sir Norman Lockyer among his friends, not to mention other scientific men, such as Faraday, Owen, and Hooker.

The John Murray of his day consulted him as to publishing 500 copies of the "Origin of Species." Murray was extremely sceptical as to the soundness of the work, and thought 500 copies as large a number as it was prudent to print. He remarked that the Darwinian theory was as absurd as though one should contemplate a fruitful union between a poker and a rabbit. George Pollock read the book, and remarked that the contents were probably beyond the comprehension of any scientific man then living. But he advised publishing 1,000 copies because "Mr. Darwin had so brilliantly surmounted the formidable obstacles which he was honest enough to put in his own path." This is

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an interesting example of the way in which a man of good general ability; accustomed as a lawyer is to apply broad principles of reason to different kinds of subject-matter, may arrive at sounder conclusions than a specialist.

Talks with him were always a liberal education, because they gave first-hand impressions of an excellent observer in regard to many characters whose biographies are often written by persons who have not even seen the subject of the biography. - It was thus thrilling for me, who had always admired the career of Mrs. Norton and read a recent account of her life, to hear that at a time when the differences between Mr. and Mrs. George Norton were most acute, the Chief Baron put his house at the disposal of both, so that Mrs. Norton should see her children there. She was accustomed to meet them in a room at one end of which George Pollock (on at least one occasion) sat and read the

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“Encyclopædia Britannica,” while she played with them at the other end. Usually his sister Mary was there. The heroines of history are not always wholly approved by their contemporaries. An old man, long since dead, told me that the advent of Florence Nightingale was not at first popular with the soldiers in the Crimea, because they felt embarrassed by the idea of female nursing. Similarly, Mrs. Norton was thought by some to be “playing to the gallery,” and in the opinion of Baron Martin, “talked to too many men” on one occasion when crossing the Atlantic. But George Pollock nevertheless sympathized, as his father did, with her position as regards her children.

His talk, as might be expected, shed light on social usages of the past. One night the Duchess of Somerset was driving near Wimbledon and her carriage fell into a ditch. George Pollock was passing and assisted her and the coachman to get the

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vehicle out of the ditch, and collect various toys and pieces of china back into the carriage. The next morning the Duchess, "in a refined manner," sent a military friend to convey her acknowledgments but did not come herself, since, for aught she knew, her benefactor might have had a "vulgar wife who would return the call."

He mentioned that baths first came into fashion in the 'fifties, and caused much annoyance to a certain old colonel since they encumbered the officers' luggage. "These young men," he complained, "keep washing themselves till there is not a bit of natural smell about them." The only unpardonable smell was of course tobacco. Even onions were preferable. Though the late King Edward introduced smoking as far as he could, even when his hosts drove him into the stable-room, George Pollock, despite his respect for the Church, felt it his duty, even in 1883, to

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remonstrate with a curate who smoked a cigar at a garden party.

His attitude to the divorce question interested me. He mentioned that all the lawyers of the time strongly supported the Act of 1857 in spite of ecclesiastical opposition. But he felt himself "incompetent to form an opinion" on the question, which curiously illustrated the survival of the old Catholic tradition that marriage should be an institution entirely subject to ecclesiastical control and jurisdiction.

He naturally told many stories of his father and the law. One of his earliest memories was of mischievously abstracting Scarlett's spectacles from the back of his coat just as he was about to read an important letter to the jury. This was in 1833, when he was a boy of twelve. He mentioned how his brother judges would give way to Maule for fear of his ability and sharp tongue till on one occasion Maule, after delivering judgment and then

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hearing all the other judgments, suddenly remarked : “ After mature consideration, I differ from my learned brothers. I have come to the conclusion that my judgment was wrong, and the first misgivings that occurred to me about it were due to the fact that my brothers agreed with it.”

As a boy of eighteen he had attended the famous trial of John Frost and others whom his father ably defended on a charge of high treason at Monmouth. He used to relate with great gusto the objection to the proceedings taken on the ground that the list of witnesses had not been handed to the prisoners *with* the copy of the indictment as prescribed by the Act of Queen Anne. It was in that trial that a woman was closely cross-examined about the movements of her husband, who had returned home very late and come straight up to bed. “ As he was getting into bed,” she said, “ his words were——” But here she was sharply interrupted by Counsel :

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“ You must not tell us what he *said*, because that is not evidence ; you can only tell us what he *did*.”

His grandfather, David Pollock, had come to London from Berwick, and started a saddler and military contractor's business at Charing Cross. David's father was a bookseller at Berwick-on-Tweed, and his grandfather (George Pollock thought) was a cobbler at Perth in the seventeenth century. David died in 1815, and was embarrassed by the fact that Parliament did not allow enough money to cover the liabilities of the Duke of York, not to mention those of the Duke of Kent. He was sometimes in attendance on Royalty itself, when he had to present himself in Court dress. But David died solvent in 1815, and his business was carried on for two years afterwards by his widow and his son William. William died early at the age of thirty-five. Another son, David, who became before his death Lord Chief

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Justice of Bombay, was sixty-seven at the time of his death. He has been described as a singularly lovable man. Of the other sons, George, my great-uncle's godfather, was ultimately a Field-Marshal, and Frederick the Chief Baron of the Exchequer. It was quite usual for one of the sons to sleep under the counter if the house was more full than usual, and more than one slept there on the occasion of David's funeral. The other son, John, was an adventurous solicitor. He was renowned for his prowess at racquets and generally as an athlete. In the same day he once walked from London to Windsor, won a foot race, and walked back again. He had his vicissitudes and once found a valuable friend in Mr. Heathorn, the father of Mrs. Huxley, who told me of it when she became my grandmother-in-law.

But the hero of George Pollock's stories was usually his father, the Chief Baron, whose judgments bulk so large in the

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Common Law of England. Unlike his brother John, he thought taking exercise a bore, unless it took the form of dancing or of leaping over tables and chairs, as a friend of mine who is still alive, saw him doing at an hotel in Norwich after receiving a pair of white gloves when he was about seventy-five years old. He drove up from Hatton every day in his family coach, though his sedentary habits never prevented his doing justice to his excellent brown sherry, a few bottles of which I once had the privilege of possessing in my own cellar. In later years he drove to and from Waterloo station, and the railway company arranged an afternoon train for his convenience. Though he kept very open house at Hatton, he had a frugal mind in less essential matters. Thus, on consulting Sir Harris Nicolas in regard to tracing the family coat of arms, he was told that it would cost £100 in London, but subsequently discovered that the same

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operation could be performed in Edinburgh for £20, which gave him great satisfaction. There is a romantic legend that the Pollocks were ruined by the Hanoverians in the Rebellion of 1715, and that the Pollock boar is to be found on a prison wall in Carlisle Castle, presumably carved by a Pollock in captivity. But the Chief Baron cared little for these things, and derived pleasure from recording that his father was a saddler, and that he owed much to his mother's co-operation in the family business and belief in himself when a boy. His career at Trinity College, Cambridge, was mainly due to her unsparing efforts. A Fellow of the College also made a very timely loan, which was duly repaid.

He had a very human sympathy with prisoners. I have a volume of his notes of evidence, and in one of the murder trials he lays great stress to the jury on the fact that there was no Court of Criminal Appeal. There is a story of a certain burglar having

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been induced by the prison chaplain to atone for his crime by pleading guilty before the Chief Baron. But after an interval in the Court the burglar returned to the chaplain *acquitted*. "When I saw that good, kind man sitting in Court," he explained, "I knew I should be acquitted, and really could not bring myself to plead guilty."

I have put together as much as I can have recorded of George Pollock's reminiscences. Probably there is better material at the disposal of others; but perhaps this attempt to collect what I heard may stimulate a better qualified relation or friend to write something worthier of him. Such a collection would to some extent mitigate the loss of his winning personality. For a man to be missed as he now is after dying on the verge of his ninety-fourth birthday, shows how little old age can extinguish a rare and singularly loving spirit. Up to the last he answered every letter by return

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of post, and his letters were as affectionate as on the other hand they were businesslike, when the occasion demanded. We shall not see his like again. Even his type is gone. The combination of kindliness, geniality, and pawky humour that distinguished him is not to be found in our day.

“ Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Tam cari capitis ? ”

THREE MEN OF PEACE

Nor long ago I dreamed that I was before a Tribunal which was to decide my liability for military service. In my dream I was nearly fifty years old ; and it had been internationally agreed that in the interests of the human race, all men between forty and sixty should be called up before the younger men. The Tribunal, composed of impartial persons between twenty and forty, was on the whole very polite and judicial, except in certain cases of fire-eating editors and newspaper proprietors, who were not found as indispensable to the State in their professional capacities as they imagined. I do not

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think that I ever grasped who were our enemies in the dream-war; but with the curious forgetfulness of a dreamer, I saw, sitting on the Tribunal, three friends of mine, namely: Rupert Brooke, his younger brother, Alfred, and Frederic Hillersdon Keeling. They had all developed along the lines I had expected. Rupert was Professor of English Literature at Cambridge, Alfred a pillar of City finance, and Ben Keeling (as his friends called him) head of a Sociological Research Department.

I woke up before my own case came on, and wondered why these three particular friends should have been associated in my dream. I think it was because they were all so temperamentally opposed to ideals connected with war or any other form of cruelty. In their Cambridge days, when I first knew them, they would have fought conscription to the last ditch. To Rupert Brooke and Keeling Germany was a less foreign country than France. Yet they all

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went straight into the Army in August 1914 with more alacrity than some of those who disdain pacific ideals. So typical were they of many others who have died or encountered even worse disasters (such as blindness and loss of reason) in the war, that personal impressions of them may perhaps be of general interest.

Rupert Brooke always appeared singularly unruffled by any events, political or otherwise, in his almost Shelleyan existence at Grantchester. I see him tugging my little boat up the sunny shallows of the Cam, in a flannel shirt and shorts, to a place just above Byron's Pool where we bathed with his friends. His talk was simple, detached, and ironical. I remarked to him one day how distressed any poet of the late nineties would have been by a pane of yellow glass in a door that opened on to the Vicarage lawn; and he said how much he enjoyed the charming illusion of sunshine it gave him on a wet day. In the summer days.

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of July 1914, when he was just back from his travels, he seemed more personally interested in the world; but his most salient characteristic before the war was always a marked gentleness of character. I could not imagine him involved in any quarrel; and his indignation after seeing the agonized evacuation of Antwerp was only a logical development of his own ideals. Though always in pursuit of realities, he had never before been face to face with cruelty on a large scale. He himself describes the almost tidal conflict in his own mind and all the queer muddle of English and German memories when the war broke out, in one of his best essays, which has already acquired an historical value.

Alfred Brooke, who was killed while asleep in a dug-out by a high explosive on the 14th June, 1915, was, perhaps, even more to his friends than his brother; for he was by temperament more intimate

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and less elusive. But I knew him better than Rupert, and may be wrong as to this. La Bruyère has remarked that there are some whose glory it is to write, and others whose glory it is not to write. It was Alfred's glory to *talk* in his own mellow, humorous, inimitable manner, and to make others talk also. He was, I must imagine, the most charming host, guest, and traveling-companion of his generation. He was the ideal embodiment of all that is conveyed by the old motto: "*Sodalitas, Convivium.*" He was myriad-minded in his interests; but modern finance appealed to his imagination, and he threw in his lot with it till the war made havoc of finance and financiers. He then promptly devoted himself to a life, which, apart from the purpose of trying to end the offensive chaos, was for him singularly tedious and boring. Volumes of Gibbon and piles of the *New Statesman* and the *New Witness* followed him up to his last dug-out. To

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the very end his courage was no less conspicuous than his frank disgust with the brutalities of war and the horrors of walking through trenches over masses of German dead. He was firmly convinced that if the Kaiser and his General Staff had ever had to fight in trenches themselves, the "mailed fist" would never have materialized. He was a Liberal stalwart who would have fought conscription in England tooth and nail; though under any intelligent system of conscription either he or his brother would probably have been employed in a less hazardous department of the War Machine. He has, at least, escaped seeing the destruction of the amiable, if unsophisticated, Liberalism that he so ardently supported. But for those who loved him he leaves a drab world.

Of quite a different type was Sergeant F. H. Keeling. The Brookes were of King's; Keeling was of Trinity. Keeling

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was an impetuous and vociferous reformer of the Fabian School. In his chambers at Lincoln's Inn blue-books littered his capacious table, and even his floor and his bed. The social progressiveness of the whole modern world blew like a gale through these otherwise "dusty purlieus of the law."

For anyone who, like myself, associated Fabian ideals with a certain humanity of regimentation and an abstract unreality in logically and practically developing notions which were plausible only on paper, to know Keeling was a valuable education. He loved human beings almost *en masse*, and his affection knew no distinction or limitation. His friends were of all ranks and ages. His elderly bedmaker at Cambridge, his artisan cronies, his Civil Service colleagues, and nearly all the men and women he came across, were all alike charmed by his disinterested enthusiasm for reforms of all kinds. He would give endless time and

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trouble to putting right some case of individual distress or hardship; he was never content, as most reformers are, to note the case for future use in propaganda. His head was as open as his heart; he was never satisfied with his own notions of things. "Give us this day our daily idea, and forgive us what we thought yesterday," might have been his prayer had he been in the habit of praying, which he was not. Pomposity and the cold dignity of the aspiring prophet were not in his composition. The vocabulary with which before the war he championed the ideals of Nonconformity, Puritanism, and Prohibition, would have speedily cleared any conventicle or assembly-room of Nonconformists, Puritans, or Prohibitionists. The war, indeed, so far changed his ideas, that in one of his last letters he wrote to me that "if there were a Valhalla, he would sample the best brews" for my benefit, in anticipation of my advent. In another

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letter, from a hospital at the front, he mentioned that even an unreformed world could seem very sweet on a fine day.

Others have written of his military life, which he keenly enjoyed. True to his convictions of human equality, he enlisted as a private and refused all offers of a commission, though he could not avoid being made a sergeant. He threw all his marvellous energy and enthusiasm into the war, and will (I imagine) never be forgotten either by officers or men. Like Rupert and Alfred Brooke, Raymond Asquith, and so many others, he went to his death as though the undying words of Aeschylus called him :

*Ἐλευθεροῦτε πατρίδ', ἐλευθεροῦτε δέ
Παῖδας, γυναῖκας, θεῶν τε πατρώων ἔδη,
Θῆκας τε προγόνων· νῦν ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀγών.*

To some survivors, perhaps, the honour and glory of death in action is some consolation. For me, and probably many

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others, the whole tragedy is unrelieved by the thought that the shoddy vain-glory of two diseased Emperors and the folly or criminality of their subjects should have bled Europe of her best lives. The sense of loss to England in the death of all these young men must surely obliterate all the old romantic nonsense about war for several decades at least. But the criminal vanity of a dynasty like the Hohenzollerns, and all the poisonous brood of ideas developed to minister to that vanity, will not be easily exterminated. It may soon rise again from its ashes if we allow ourselves to relapse into a mood of sentimental acquiescence in accomplished facts, and console ourselves too easily with reflections on the honour and glory of the dead. "Who dies if England lives?" like most rhetorical questions invites no answer. But one may well ask what sort of England would survive if wars on the present scale occurred in each decade. Certainly not

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the England that produced Chaucer's
Knight :

“ And though that he was worthy, he was wise,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no yilanie ne sayde
In alle his lif unto no manere wight ;
He was a veray parfit gentil knight.”

SIR HARRIS NICOLAS AND HIS AUTOGRAPHS

THE uncertainty of human life and the wholesale destruction of property in war make many a possessor of interesting records anxious to publish them while they still exist. For many years I have been in possession of interesting documents which belonged to my great-grandfather, Sir Harris Nicolas, such as autograph letters from Nelson, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and others from his friends, such as Barham and Babbage, of which a selection is here given.

I have been asked at different times to write a short memoir of Sir Harris, but have always postponed doing so for want of sufficient leisure. There is, however, an

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excellent sketch of his career in the "Dictionary of National Biography;" and the longer story of it would only constitute a heavy indictment against his contemporaries for their indifference to research and exact learning, which seems superfluous now that the war has so seriously exposed the national apathy in the region of science.

Sir Harris was one of those brilliant amateurs who have built up the intellectual prestige of this country, but who have rarely been able to accomplish their work properly unless, like Darwin and others, they have also been well-to-do. Carlyle mentions meeting him in March, 1832, as follows :

"Yesternight I saw Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas, Knight of the Guelphic Order, Antiquarian, and what not ; a good-natured, rattling, small rather than thick-headed mortal ; he said (coming home with me through Chancery Lane) : ' I believe I have ruined (or done more to ruin) more

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booksellers than any man living ; no book of mine ever paid its expenses.' ”

Hood refers to him in his poem, “ Miss Kilmansegg ” as an expert in pedigrees, and rhymes his name to “ ridiculous.” Carlyle again refers to him in “ Latter Day Pamphlets ” as the modern substitute for Homer when condemning the dullness of his own times.

Sir Harris was born on the 10th March, 1799, and entered the Royal Navy, of which he was to be the historian, on the 27th October, 1808. As a midshipman he saw much active service, and narrowly escaped death capturing French frigates off the coast of Calabria. He became a Lieutenant on the 20th September, 1815, and in the following year was put on half pay owing to peace. He returned to his native town, Looe, in Cornwall, and inherited some land there on attaining his majority. This property had been mis-

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managed during his minority; and when it was sold, some years later, the purchase money only cleared off incumbrances.

On the 28th March 1822 he married Lady Nicolas, and in a few years they came to London. In 1824 he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and on the 6th May 1825 was called to the Bar. He had already started writing in 1823 with "Notitia Historica," and followed it up with volumes on the peerage and old wills. He is, of course, principally known to the general reader as the editor of Nelson's dispatches; but the range and versatility of his other writings, which need not be here enumerated, is astonishing.

In the France or Germany of his own day his talents would have been used to proper advantage. Unfortunately he was handicapped at every turn. His family increased as rapidly as the number of his unremunerative treatises, so that except for a very short period of peerage practice

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he was in constant embarrassment till his final exile in Boulogne, where he died, broken by misfortune, on the 3rd August, 1848. The records on which he worked were under the control of officials who were expected to collect their own remuneration by imposing fees at their discretion on those who wanted to see them; and if ever useful service was done to the cause of sound learning, it was the Nicolas evidence before the Records Commission in 1836. His troubles were aggravated by being made a Knight in 1831; for in those days it was necessary to "keep up" that rank in proper style; and though the Court frequently used his services, he received no emoluments of any kind. He became G.C.M.G. in 1840; but even this brought him no kind of appointment.

In spite of his energy and industry, which kept him at work for whole days without interruption, his health was permanently damaged by the rough con-

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ditions of his early life in the Navy. He was by temperament both irritable and candid; and, like many sailors, was no respecter of persons. His pamphlets about Palgrave and Panizzi show how little inclined he was to consider his own interests when he set out to remedy a private or public grievance.

Perhaps no more need be said about the public services and private character of a courageous pioneer in legal and historical research, nor should I have considered it necessary to say as much but for a recent criticism of Sir Harris by a contemporary historian as being "aggressive and passionate." The ample facilities enjoyed by that historian in his work, as compared with the miserable difficulties of my ancestor's career, might surely have tempered such language about him.

As regards the autographs, I do not know how those not written to Sir Harris were acquired, except that Mrs. Nelson

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Ward (Nelson's daughter, Horatia) gave him many naval letters. There are, for instance, two very interesting letters to Lady Hamilton (one annotated by her); but these are included in the dispatches. There are, however, two unpublished letters from Byron and Shelley. Shelley writes on the 20th June, 1822, from Lerici to Leigh Hunt at Leghorn, as follows :

Enquire when you arrive for any information you may want of Mr. Dunn, the English shopkeeper. Your arrival gives me spirits enough to laugh at almost anything. I know not how to impute my want of them to either love or veal-cutlets.* I hope to enjoy much of the

* He seems to have begun to write "pork," but crossed it out and wrote "veal-cutlets," perhaps for Hunt's benefit. He certainly did not hanker after meat, although on the testimony of Peacock he thrived during the river-trip of August 1815 on a diet of "mutton chops, well-peppered."

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one and devour many of the other in your presence. I hope to forget what I might have been in my content with what I am.

I embrace you all affectionately.

Yours ever,

P. B. S.

This must have been one of the last letters he ever wrote.

Byron was at Genoa at the date of his letter, which is apparently unpublished. It was addressed to Leigh Hunt :

Nov. 23rd, 1822.

DEAR H.,

Murray wrote to me some time ago that Mr. Taaffe's comment* had arrived *in* the river, but whether we are "to search its bottom or survey its shore"

* "Count" Taaffe, the "butt" of the Pisa circle, had printed a "Dante Commentary," at Pisa, which John Murray had undertaken to publish, at Byron's recommendation.

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for the literary ballast is known only to Prester John himself, who hath been intent as an oracle ever since upon the subject. This is all that I can say on that topic. I had done with my part in getting it so far forwards to the market. I have heard no news of the Liberal* except that Lord — says in a note that he heareth by letter that “it has made a great stir” in London—but as there be several variations of “stir” in that metropolis—I do not augur very favourably. Also your brother would have written once before. Had you not better write to H. Smith that we will take in the M.P.R. as they continue sending it to us? How and where is the subscription to be paid? I am out of sorts for they are (illegible) out the hall—for this ball to-morrow which is a great

* Leigh Hunt's quarterly publication which he had come out to Italy to edit, at Byron's invitation. The first number is dated October 15th 1822.]

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vex—but as promised the Neighbourhood's deputation—word must be kept. I hope that Mrs. H. is better.

Yours ever,
N. B.

Addressed to
Leigh Hunt, Esq.,
Albano.

There is an undated letter from Wordsworth :

Friday.

My DEAR MRS. POWELL,

Here I am, 41, Upper Grosvenor Street, but so much tossed about in this vast city that I scarcely know where and when to appoint a meeting. To-morrow I go to Windsor. Sunday I am engaged, and so on. Could you call (one) day here between five and six and wait if I should not be in ?

Ever faithfully yours,
WM. WORDSWORTH.

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The year of the following letter from Sir Walter Scott is not recorded ; but the letter runs thus :

Abbotsford,

1st January.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have read with the greatest interest and attention the negotiations of Bishop Beckington which you favour me with a copy of. They possess high interest as historical documents regarding an age of which we know so little as the early part of Henry VI. (illegible). It is in such minute details rather than in the generalities of ordinary history that we discover those minute traces by which the peculiar habits of our ancestors may be traced and recognized. I have not heard what it is that prevents you from your promised attention to Greene his works and literary squabbles, but I regret much that the book is not in your hands as it is

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material to English littérature and very well worthy of such illustrations as you would bestow. On my return to Edinburgh I hope to send you a copy of a trifling work which I have printed for the Roxburghe Club, of which I hope your favourable acceptance.

I am, sir, with renewed thanks,

Your very much obliged servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

A letter from Lockhart shows that Sir Harris knew how to get his works reviewed in the *Quarterly*; but is not of interest otherwise. There are letters from the Duke of Wellington, Lyndhurst, Brougham, and others which are not noteworthy for their contents; but the Duke's letter is characteristic :

London,

Feb. 20th, 1841.

The Duke of Wellington presents his

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compliments to Sir Harris Nicolas. He was Knight of the Bath in 1804. He has no recollection of anything else.

The last attempted literary enterprise of Sir Harris was to edit the letters of Sir Hudson Lowe. Here is a letter from Sir Hudson :

MY DEAR SIR HARRIS,

I feel much obliged by your kind invitation to pay a visit at Rose Cottage, and should be much gratified to go over the classic ground of Windsor with you—more unique and proud in its associations than all the other Royal and Imperial residences in Europe joined together except always that where the Holy Father still holds his Court ; but I fear it will not be in my power to do it. To-morrow I go down to Suffolk to bring my daughter up to Town if the kind friend with whom

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she is staying will allow me to do so, and I must confess I shall have some scruple in bringing her away from a very pleasant country residence to be imposing my weariness upon her, during this sultry weather, in Town, but we are not always masters of our own actions, which appears to me the strongest argument which can be offered against the *utility* of that doctrine for which, as you will see by the inclosed (sent without his knowledge), my son still continues so strenuous an advocate. It matters not, in fact, what our disposition or natural inclinations may be if circumstances *will* force us to act otherwise. I am happy at all events to be able to congratulate Lady Nicolas and your daughters as well as yourself in being able to follow yours in what must prove so agreeable a variety to you, and with most sincere thanks for your many acts of real kindness and with my best regards to Lady Nicolas and the Misses Nicolas, in which

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I venture to anticipate my daughters.

Most heartily yours, I remain always,

My dear Sir Harris,

Your most obliged and faithful,

H. LOWE.

22nd Sept. 1843.

Two of Sir Harris's most intimate friends were Babbage, the mathematician, and Barham, the author of the "Ingoldsby Legends."

The following letters of Babbage and Barham are characteristic :

MY DEAR LADY NICOLAS,

I do not know whether your daughter yet goes out, as the phrase is, but perhaps you may not be unwilling to make an exception to a philosopher's party, especially as it is possible I may have no reunions of my friends next season. As Sir Harris is, of course, a great stickler for *precedent*, pray assure him I can give him several similar cases in which my parties

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have profited by the presence of young ladies of great wit and beauty whose fathers had the discernment to see the fit cases to be made the exceptions. I hope, therefore, to have the pleasure of seeing Miss Nicolas on Saturday next, and that you will always consider her included in my cards.

I am, dear Lady Nicolas,
Ever truly yours,
CHARLES BABBAGE.

14th Febr. 1840.

MY DEAR SIR HARRIS,

Garter's engagement with me is on Friday, 16th, the day *before* the one on which you ask me to partake of your hospitality. Now if you will do me the favour to join our party on that day at seven, I shall be most happy to avail myself of your kind invitation for the following day.

Pray make my best respects to Lady Nicolas and the young ladies, to whom I

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pledge myself for a ghost story on demand
(they will know what I mean).

And believe me ever,

Most faithfully yours,

R. H. BARHAM.

Amen Grove (*corner* the post-office
people call it),

June 8th, 1843.

The following, characteristic of Leigh Hunt, who was long-winded even when he refused an invitation, was probably written to Margaret Gillies, who painted a portrait of Leigh Hunt now in the National Portrait Gallery. In a letter to Dr. S. Smith, Leigh Hunt says: "Ask the dear Gillieses, nevertheless, to love me a little bit still, and do you so much"

Chelsea,

January 8th.

How monstrous, my dear Margaret, that I cannot come to you on either of these days! For if you have all been so desirous,

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like good friends, to see me, I assure you the wish has been heartily matched by my own. But I have so much work to do this week and next, that I am afraid to break in upon it with pleasures, which temperate as they are, divert me from my task more than you can imagine. Give my love to Dr. Smith* and ask him to be kind enough to repeat his invitation for some day the week after next, and most gladly will I break out of my studious chrysalis and be (in every respect, alas ! and yet what is the good of saying " alas ? ")—a strange kind of winter butterfly. And I will then make you laugh with an account of a fit of illness I have had, during which I was ashamed to send for Dr. S. (for it was a Christmas illness), but was

* Dr. Thomas Southwood Smith (1788–1861), Leigh Hunt's medical attendant and friend, is described in the "Dictionary of National Biography" as "Sanitary Reformer." It was to Smith that Bentham left his body by will for dissection, 1832.

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resolved, so far, to shew myself his not unworthy patient by most heroically abstaining from taking a single spoonful of brandy, which everybody swore would put an end to it. So I gloriously proclaimed my devotion to his orders, and had the pleasure of hearing his name alternately denounced and admired for producing martyrdom so inveterate. Would to heaven I could boast on the active side of the devotion, as well as the passive, but you know what Shelley said of the good heroine I should have made; though indeed to complete that character the active part must and shall come. Always

Your affectionate friend,

L. H.

The following letter from Procter (better known as Barry Cornwall) to Robert Browning is of great literary interest, for Browning cannot have had many admirers in 1841 :

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Thursday night,
5, Grove End Place,
St. John's Wood,
21st Sep. 1841.

MY DEAR BROWNING,

There is some cause (some good cause) why I do not see you now and then, come and tell me what it is. I have asked Macready, Blanchard, and Forster to dine with me on Tuesday next at a quarter before seven—will you come also? Say yes; in order that you may tell me why you (an idle man in common phrase) never come and seek me as I would seek you—were I a master of my time, and you not.

I am a bachelor (*Felix ter et* what is the rest?) I require the congratulations of my friends. My wife is in Italy—well and happy—and about to return. She will be glad to know that you are well also.

Some time ago—some months, indeed—I began a letter to you, in verse, commencing with :

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"Browning, my boy, when will you come and taste

Our calm suburban air ? We are not graced
Often with poets in our humble," etc.

but I could not get on.

There are a dozen lines or so accomplished, but the rest is—air. A bump on the pavement last winter has dissipated my ideas. Some of these days I will give you (in exchange) my copy of the *Sordello*, in which you will see that I have carefully read the book (times over, indeed). I have said half a dozen times that—although it is decidedly drama—yet that it manifests more power (above all, there is the great Iris bow of promise) than the *Paracelsus*. Do not be offended with your critics, but *make them serve you* to step higher ; as I am sure you will ; were I younger and had more leisure I should like to run an honourable tilt with you—(dramatically)—and see which of us could do the best. Do not despise me as a rival because of *Mirandola*,

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for I utterly despise that and can do better things.

Be assured of this, that however authors may meet with temporary applause, there is *no one* to be afraid of at the present day. I am quite sure of this.

A man has only to gird up his loins and fight boldly and sincerely. Let me hear from you.

Yours very sincerely,

B. W. PROCTER.

There are other letters from John Lingard, Agnes Strickland, the historian of the Queens of England, Thackeray, John Bright, and Chief Baron Pollock ; but they have little interest except for the handwriting and purely personal considerations.

The tattered autograph album revives for me memories of sitting over it as a little boy with a fragile, but very sympathetic and entertaining, old lady who talked much of her father. She remembered the pale

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features of Hallam; but said that Macaulay was too much of a Radical to visit the Nicolas household. She spoke of the old château Amrémont at Boulogne which her father hired because of its Napoleonic associations and in spite of its sanitary dangers. She remembered the trees of Liberty in the streets which marked the year 1848. Just before her death she sent me the album, which was her most treasured possession, and I think she would have desired some at least of its contents to be printed for those who are at all interested in the "old, unhappy, far-off things" of this world.

A MEMOIR OF "OLD HUMPHREY"

THIS charming little book, which I was fortunate enough to get the other day, is a delightful tribute to one of our forgotten worthies, to wit, George Mogridge, who was born on the 17th February 1787 and died on the 2nd November 1854, and is written in his own incomparable style.

Many of us must have been familiar in youth with the voluminous works, without knowing the identity, of the author, whose writings, to quote the memoir, "have been perused in the drawing-room with pleasure and profit, while they have conveyed instruction to the cottager, the mechanic, the sailor, the soldier, and the poor man's child . . . and obtained a circulation wherever the

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English language is spoken." - In writing for the Religious Tract Society he adopted the various but suitable names of "Grandfather Gregory," "Uncle Adam," "Grandmamma Gilbert," and "Aunt Upton."

"It is believed," writes his anonymous biographer, "that the writings of Mr. Mogridge are free from all that would injure the mind or debase the affections." This we may well accept when we hear of "Old Humphrey" sitting among his books, with "a large card before him, on which were written in a bold style the three words 'ALLURE—INSTRUCT—IMPRESS,' to remind him of his work, and the way in which it was to be done." That he eschewed the insidious temptations of "trying to act the buffoon" and "leaving volumes of wit and humour behind him" was a source of real consolation to at least one of his friends on the occasion of his demise. Old Humphrey has himself written that "it would

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be no bad method to find out the lawfulness or unlawfulness of our pleasures, and the spiritual or worldly state of our affections, were we to ask ourselves this question in the midst of every enjoyment, 'Can we put up a hearty hallelujah at the end of it?' " Such a standard is indeed an infallible safeguard against buffoonery.

Nevertheless the channel of his work was determined by a series of providential incidents which his biographer frankly portrays in the best Mogridgian manner. One of his early and more profane works was entitled "The Churchyard Lyrist" (perhaps subsequently extended into "The Churchyard Prattler"). "It is hoped," we read, "that it answered the purpose of the publishers better than it did that of the author. The price agreed on for the copyright was £50; but as it was to be received in copies, and as Mr. Mogridge gave three-fourths of the books away, his pocket was thereby very little replenished."

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How familiar this tragedy will seem to some of us ! Young writers who have not yet achieved Old Humphrey's popularity will sympathize even more deeply with him in his later disappointments. "A publisher, to whom he had offered a small manuscript for £10, placed it flat on his counter, and measuring it with his hand, said, with a consequential air, that he had bought manuscripts double the height for five." Mr. Mogridge, however, appears to have been buoyed up by the memory of Milton obtaining only five pounds for "Paradise Lost," and even went so far as to send "sparkling contributions" to "add lustre" to a new magazine called the *Comet*. The *Comet*, after printing only one such contribution, unfortunately fell to earth again. The office of the magazine was shut up on the day when the second number of the work was to appear. "These misadventures" (we are told) "gave a serious turn to Mr.

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Mogridge's thoughts, and brought him into association with enterprises of a more decidedly religious character than he at first contemplated. He felt the necessity of applying in quarters where greater reliance could be placed," and proceeded to forward one tract per week to a respectable bookseller called Houlston for publication.

In a verse tract entitled "Thomas Brown: or a Dialogue on Sunday Morning," Mr. Mogridge gloriously triumphed in distracting the popular taste from that less innocent verse which a printer, after vainly trying to elevate his customers, had been forced by economic necessity to supply. Old Humphrey's verse owed its inspiration to a "rough sketch in a kind of poetical prose" delivered to him by a "worthy relative." The "rustic throng" were caught at once by the "artless history of the sabbath-breaker." The verses were recited aloud and "with breathless attention they" (*i.e.*, the rustic throng) "drank

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in with greedy ears the words of the reciter until 'Thomas Brown' was represented as attending the village church. The description that followed won every heart. . . . 'Thomas Brown' used to be familiarly chanted in the streets of London. . . . One man was so constantly engaged in reciting the tract that he seemed to have no other occupation."

This was the beginning of Mr. Mogridge's really striking success, though he modestly told the Religious Tract Society that "he feared the buoyancy and flow of his thoughts were unsuited to the force and sobriety required in religious tracts." His works included "The Sabbath-breaker Reclaimed: or Thomas Brown," "The Infidel Blacksmith," "John Tomkins, the Dram-drinker," "Footprints of Popery," "The Woolly Bear," "Gaffer Greenwood's Pleasant Tales," "Juvenile Culprits," "Old Humphrey's Walks in London," "Old Humphrey's Country Strolls," "Learning

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to Think," "Learning to Feel," "Learning to Converse," and many other little volumes concerning all of which his biographer very properly writes: "He ever took a sunny and hopeful view of things as they rose before him; yet however gay, he was never *volatile* nor lost sight of the responsibility of authorship or his character as a Christian."

The popularity of these works is undoubtedly significant to the student of English history. Old Humphrey's great sayings are not without their influence on our thought and action. Take, for example, "Habitual cheerfulness is no unfit attendant on healthy piety," or "The morality of a painting reaches the judgment only by passing through the lengthy avenues of reason and reflection, while its immorality influences the passions instantaneously through the eye." Such *obiter dicta* reveal isolated currents of opinion that still find voice in some great periodicals of to-day,

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and in this connection we may well be glad to know that the editor of "Ackerman's Poetical Magazine" was profuse in his acknowledgments for Old Humphrey's "disinterested aid." This, however, was in the days of his literary adolescence—the days when Mr. Mogridge, overcome by the beauties of natural scenery, would fall "on his knees with a fervour of feeling that was painful to him, and prayed that God in his goodness would either subdue his emotions, or give him the greater ability to sustain the enjoyment of them."

The two cardinal defects in his work are his habit of answering his own rhetorical questions and his exuberant delight in family vaults, the latter of which he yearned to adorn with drapery. Of the first I may take these specimens :

" And did the magic of romantic lays
Seduce the leisure of my earlier days ?
Did fancy spread her varied charms around,
And lead me wandering o'er enchanted ground ?

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" *Oh yes, and oft these transitory toys
Have flung a sunbeam on my passing joys.
And has the midnight taper wasted been
In pondering legend hoar, and fairy scene ?
Have idle fictions o'er my fancy stole,
And superstition's tales beguiled my soul ?* "

" *They have,*" etc., etc.

As to the vaults, we are sorry to find Mr. Mogridge writing about an impending funeral to a bereaved daughter, " I shall go, not aweeping, so far as sorrow is concerned, but, as *a rejoicing pilgrim*, to Norwood Cemetery," and again, " The vault is an excellent one ; and many of the girls who attend the church will sit exactly over the dust of their late instructor."* In fact, the reader is perhaps less surprised than Old Humphrey to learn the effect of his ministrations to a father who had recently

* " The dust " is quite an unusual expression. We usually read of " the mouldering tenant of the tomb."

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lost his son : “ When we paid him a visit of condolence, a bear robbed of her whelps could hardly have been more irascible.”

William Wordsworth, however, was less sensitive :

“ When in the neighbourhood of Rydal Mount, Mr. Mogridge could not repress a desire to see the man whose talented writings had afforded him hours of enjoyment. Not with a feeling of idle and intrusive curiosity, but with a sense of deep respect and honour, he wrote rapidly a brief note, in which he inclosed his card, and forwarded it to Mr. Wordsworth.

“ ‘ And I, too (among the thousand and one strangers passing through this land of mountains and meres, who would enjoy the same privilege) would fain see Wordsworth. My letters of introduction are a graven brow, a sprinkling of the grey on my head, a respectful and affectionate admiration of the author of the ‘ Ex-

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cursion,' and a pledge that I will not rob him of more than five minutes of his valuable time.

" 'The Builder of the mountains,
The Maker of the meres,
Go with thee, gifted man, and spread
The sunbeams round thy honour'd head,
Through this low vale of tears.'

"On reaching Rydal Mount, he heard the painful intelligence that Mr. Wordsworth had lost his only daughter a month previously. It appeared, for a moment, wrong to trespass on the grief of an afflicted parent, but the very loss increased the desire of Mr. Mogridge to see him.* He accordingly delivered his note to a servant; and in a few moments the poet-laureate came forward and took the visitor by the hand in a most cordial manner. There

* We hope that Mr. Mogridge made no suggestions for improving the family vault, but he probably meant to do so.

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was a welcome in his words and looks ; and in a short time, they were walking together round the beautiful grounds of the Mount, beholding the striking objects of the glowing scene.

“The simple and courteous demeanour of Mr. Wordsworth soon made the visitor feel quite at ease. They walked together through the retired walks and mossy alcoves of this lovely retreat, while grave and serious observations and more cheerful remarks alternately diversified their conversation. When an allusion was made to the promised five minutes, the laureate refused to hear of it. Scarcely less than an hour had passed before Mr. Mogridge took his departure, impressed with the hospitable and benignant spirit of the gifted occupant of Rydal Mount.”

Old Humphrey himself did not escape the penalty of literary celebrity. His identity was frequently suspected during

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his tours. His feelings were indeed hurt when he was suspected of preaching, and his retort on one occasion was : " I do not *preach*, but I am *read* by thousands : good-bye."

A hairdresser at Hastings once remarked to Mr. Mogridge during his toilet : " I have lately been reading a very interesting book. I can't read prosy works, but this one was quite to my taste ; it is an excellent one. It is called ' Old Humphrey's Addresses.' " He then went on to expatiate on the merits of " The Toppers," and other well-known pieces in the volume. . . . Mr. Mogridge quietly enjoyed his friend's recital. " It was just the kind of incident to bring out the natural amiability of his heart. A copy of the work was obtained in the town, and at the next interview Mr. Mogridge placed it in his hands, having previously recorded in his own trembling penmanship that it was " a gift from the author to Mr. —."

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The disconcerted and delighted hairdresser, on receiving the neat-looking volume, could scarcely believe that he had been unwittingly extolling the book to its author's face—his own customer, too!—and that the author's own hands had presented to him the valued work, to be kept as a memorial of a pious interest in his welfare." Was this hairdresser, we wonder, as simple as he appeared ?

Once, too, when passing through a crowded London street, a popular orator, seeing Mr. Mogridge, suddenly broke out in a loud voice, looking at the startled author :

" Where have you been wandering about, Thomas Brown,
In your jacket so out of repair ? "

These were the first words of the famous composition, " Thomas Brown."

" Mr. Mogridge (we are told) was not an inattentive observer of public affairs,

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though his politics took but little of a party character. On one subject, however, he was most decided—that of opposition to all the political as well as religious encroachments of Romanism. A letter to a friend at the time when the insidious inroads of Popery had aroused the attention of all sound-hearted Protestants, afforded an occasion for a statement of his views of the true nature of that antichristian system.”*

Nevertheless, his horror of Popery did not prevent his visiting France, where he met with an adventure of a desperate nature. As he says, “The object of my French excursion was to see and know as much of France and French customs as my limited opportunities would afford; there was a strong temptation to witness, but none to partake of, the thoughtless follies around me. I am, however, not attempting to justify myself, for I was wrong, but

* That statement is here suppressed in the interests of religious toleration.

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simply narrating a fact." The adventure is too long to relate, but as Old Humphrey "could only express himself in French with great difficulty, and found it out of the question to do so when excited," he had ultimately to submit to paying nineteen francs for a meal which appears to have been mainly composed of brandy. I cannot improve on the censorious comment of his biographer. "Old Humphrey, in this narrative, writes as one self-condemned. He seems, however, to have been taught a lesson of discretion by his adventure with the French *chasseur*, which he was anxious to impress on other tourists, that they might not be beguiled into similar imprudent familiarity with roadside companions and strangers."

The reader of the memoir is often anxious to visualize Mr. Mogridge, and perhaps the most moving picture of Old Humphrey is provided by himself in one of his addresses :

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"If you meet an ancient man with a kind-hearted countenance, who, as he passes a throng of playful boys, softly speaks, 'Bless you all, my little merry hearts; may you be as free from sin as you are from sorrow;' or ejaculates, as a pale-faced woman, habited in black, with a crape bonnet on her head, moves on with a dejected air, 'May thy Maker be thy Husband, and thy mourning be turned into joy;' or who comforts a little orphan boy, patting him on the head, and speaking to him of a heavenly Father, and quoting to him, 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up:' follow him up closely, for it is ten to one but he will turn out to be Old Humphrey."

I hope that the atmosphere of Mr. Mogridge and his works will appeal to others as it has appealed to me. In the days of thoughtless youth, I fear that I, like many others, only thought of Old

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Humphrey as a bore of several hundred horse-power. I have grown, however, to admire his vitality, his exuberance, the undoubted polish of his style, and the undiluted vigour of his opinions. England owes much to the sturdy honesty and zeal for propagating the truth that distinguish Old Humphrey's writings, and we might all be the better for emulating his familiarity with the Bible. As an old friend of mine, who was almost one of Old Humphrey's generation, once wrote to me of his contemporaries : " They thought more clearly, if not more profoundly, than we do to-day." The great Mogridge family has done much for us all ; and, parted as we are from them by the great revolutions in thought that have occurred since 1854, we may sometimes find ourselves envying them " their early Heaven, their happy views."

ALL SOULS' DAY

THE custom in most European countries of bringing flowers to the graves on All Souls' Day, and in modern Spain and Russia and Greece of bringing food and wine, is, of course, directly interwoven with the ancestor worship of savage tribes. This worship, as Tylor wrote, "keeps up the social relations of the living world." A particularly poignant example of it was related by Mr. Stephen Graham in the *Daily Mail* not long ago. He describes seeing a widow in East Russia bringing food to her husband's grave within a year

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of his death, and then throwing herself on the earth and sobbing out all that had happened to her and the children during the year, with all the children's inquiries after him and messages for him. Similarly, it is common to read of a bereaved person committing suicide on the grave of the beloved. A certain old lady of Exeter who was left a widow in 1845, during all the thirty years of her remaining life never left the house except to take a carriage to church on Sunday. In this way she presumably concentrated her thoughts on her husband and avoided contracting new ties and interests that might (as she thought) make his memory less vivid to her.

All this implies our passionate loyalty to the dead and our spontaneous revolt against the automatic readjustment that occurs throughout nature of loss, whether it be of a limb or a friend, so vividly described in Arnold's lines, not about death but about absence :

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“ But each day brings its petty dust
Our soon-choked souls to fill,
And we forget because we must
And not because we will.”

Yet, from a strictly rational point of view, the old lady's proceedings were no less absurd than the device of the man in Mr. Kipling's story who lived on a trapeze in order to avoid being aged by the rotation of the earth! Its logical conclusion is either partial or total suicide.

Whatever one may or may not believe as to personal immortality or survival, I scarcely think that the belief is relevant to the problem of the duties of the living to the dead, that is to say, whether they should concentrate their thoughts on the dead or consciously welcome distraction from the subject. Nothing can alter the fact that, if we meet the dead again after many years, we cannot possibly restore our relations with them to the exact condition in which they stood at the date of

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a given death. For example, a man may take up a colonial appointment for some years, and, on returning to his wife, will probably find that he and she have to "begin all over again," that is to say, to learn again all the mutual adjustment of habits entailed by married life. Even spiritualists are careful to explain that the spirit of a dead person becomes more remote from this world and less communicative as time goes on.

I maintain, therefore, that for the vast majority of persons the dead cease to be anything but memories when the first period of bereavement is over; and the pain of bereavement is nothing but the gradual admission of the fact that the dead person has, from our point of view, ceased to live, and is, in sober fact, dead.

A man who has lost his leg may constantly feel pains in his big toe, and the analogous pains of bereavement take their time to wear out. The man's memories of walks

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or other amusements when he had the leg may become all the more vivid because they are now gone for ever. So also memories of the dead may become more vivid. The point is that he loses the illusion of pains in the big toe just as we lose the illusion of the dead being still alive.

We can, perhaps, find the answer as to what our duty is to the dead by reflecting on what we should like to happen after our own deaths. We should all, no doubt, like to be remembered, but not in a painful way. The one great terror of death for the wise man is the fear of the distress and anguish that it would cause his family and friends; he would like always to be a happy memory, and not a source of vain regrets. If a man really cares about his wife, and faces death as a fact, he would surely be ashamed of any posthumous jealousy of her being happily remarried. It is becoming more and more customary for people to leave directions for the

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reduction or abolition of mourning customs, which in their origin are certainly due to fear of a malign ghost. No breach or observance of such customs can really affect the genuine elements of grief or sense of loss. On the other hand, preoccupation with the dead is to some extent the offspring of subconscious fear. The sensation, often felt soon after a death, that the dead person is watching what we do, may nowadays be tempered with affection, but the real root of it is fear of a spirit which, dislodged from its comfortable surroundings on earth, is only too ready to wreak its vengeance on those who have escaped such a misfortune. As a matter of fact, I can conceive no worse fate for the living than to feel that they are incessantly watched by the dead, or for the dead than incessantly to watch the living without being able to communicate with the living.

It is, of course, far from desirable to do any violence to natural feelings. To divert

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such feelings by unnatural absorption in work or travel, or distractions of any sort, is no real cure ; it is at best but a palliative. Sooner or later the fact of a particular death must be realized and faced. One is often repelled, of course, by those who maintain that all the beauty and poignancy of life is due to its perishability ; yet one cannot but admit the truth of Cory's lines from "Mimnermus in Church" :

" You promise heavens free from strife,
Pure truth, and perfect change of will ;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
So sweet, I fain would breathe it still ;
Your chilly stars I can forego,
This warm, kind world is all I know."

Again the readjustment that we feel disloyal in death as in love, is described by Mr. Belloc in his "Path to Rome" in a way that removes the feeling of disloyalty :

"All you that have loved passionately and have torn your hearts asunder in disillusion, do not imagine that things broken

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cannot be mended by the good angels. There is a kind of splice, called the 'long splice,' which makes a cut rope seem what it was before; it is even stronger than before, and can pass through a block. There will descend upon you a blessed hour when you will be convinced as by a miracle, and you will suddenly understand the *redintegratio amoris*. But this hour," Mr. Belloc characteristically adds, "you will not receive in the rain on the Emilian way."

We cannot keep up the illusion of permanence in life, although that illusion is, perhaps, the principal charm of being young. We have got to face the fact that this world is an unending process of flux and change, and further, that even our own selves are incessantly dying and being born again from day to day, if we are to live in any sense worthy of the word "life." We see how very old people die just because they fail to respond to the flux and change; the process, whether mental or physical, is the

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same ; indeed, we sometimes notice how middle-aged persons who are unduly subservient to very old parents lose elasticity before their time. Individuality is itself no more than a capacity to assimilate through human intercourse and observation and affections all that enables it to survive ; and all that we have assimilated from the dead will for ever remain a part of us. Memories of the dead will always form our standards and give us a certain bias of selection.

Wars such as we are enduring now only illustrate the same truths on a large scale and in the grand style. Nothing can be so melancholy as to read name after name of our fallen officers, with the almost invariable words " only son " or " only child " of the bereaved parents. Whole families seem to be wiped out every day in a process of wholesale massacre which some of us had hoped would never again afflict European civilization. We are exasperated by the criminal stupidity of Europe in allowing militarism,

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as known in modern Prussia, ever to reach the full development of its powers. We fear that, even after all this present sacrifice, this will probably not be the last European war. But we can no more escape facing the cataclysm than men whose homes have vanished in an earthquake can avoid making new homes. To allow ourselves to be paralysed by such a calamity is to betray the cause for which men are every day cheerfully giving their lives. We need not reproach ourselves with being callous if, as the war goes on, we find ourselves becoming more familiar with the idea of death on a scale hitherto unknown.

The worst wrong we can commit is to allow ourselves to be so obsessed by the idea of death as to lose the idea of life ; this may well become a stronger temptation to those who are not actually fighting than to those who are. It will be at some such moment of suicidal weakness that we shall be asked to " spare Prussia humiliation."

THE TRAGEDY OF SURVIVAL

It is safe to say that before the war death was regarded as the principal tragedy of life, rather to the exclusion of pain and disease. The autobiography of Herbert Spencer represents a continuous effort to live as long as possible, and this is specially conspicuous in his closing pages. This ideal is even more uncompromisingly expressed in the works of Metchnikoff. Metchnikoff's ideal is essentially that of the quiet life, free from accident and disturbance. This ideal of the individual life to some extent infected our idea of the community, and to some it seemed that, just as, according to Metchnikoff, the human body in old age was ultimately destroyed by phagocytes, so the com-

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munity in its old age might ultimately be destroyed by bureaucrats. There was certainly a feeling that it was rather disreputable to die young; for early death was largely associated either with ill health or with the results of a too adventurous disposition.

It was, therefore, all the more startling when, in spite of having grown up in this climate of opinion, the young men of our time—many of whom seemed little interested in public movements—suddenly faced the situation and cheerfully risked their lives for the cause of their country. Many of them were notoriously opposed to militarism in any form, and only went to the front, partly from a vague feeling of self-preserving solidarity and partly through revolt against the treatment of Belgium by the Germans. Many of them, again, had no conviction of personal immortality. They vindicated the philosophy of Omar Khayyám against the philosophy of St. Paul,

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when he wrote that to eat, drink, and be merry showed nothing but a feeling of desperation at the thought that there was no resurrection. It did not occur to some believers that to eat, drink, and be merry is not the same thing as gluttony, drunkenness, and buffoonery.

Pomponazzi, in preaching the doctrine that virtue is its own reward, especially mentions the case of the brutes, among which there exists in the parent an infallible instinct to die while preserving the life of its offspring, and therefore the species, in spite of having no belief in a future state. The whole problem has been very well stated by an American writer, now dead, in a book entitled "L'Ame Païenne."

"Au fond, ils ne s'en émeuvent pas. Ils n'ont pas plus peur que les feuilles des arbres jaunissant dans les brouillards de l'automne. Un instinct impérissable les avertit que s'ils sont la feuille qui va tomber, ils sont aussi

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l'arbre sur lequel elle repoussera, et la terre qui les porte l'un et l'autre. . . .

“Nos sensations ne meurent pas, car elles ne sont pas en nous ; c'est nous qui sommes en elles. Nous sommes les colonnes de poussière qui s'élèvent et tournoient au carrefour des vents, et peu nous importe où la colonne s'abat, car les grains de sable sont incorruptibles et déjà le vent a repris sa course.”

The war, however, has changed for the moment the whole atmosphere. The tragedy is now not so much to die as to survive. There are those who survive their children, grandchildren, friends, and husbands, and there are those who survive the war in a state of permanent mutilation or disablement. In Paris there was recently an entertainment given at the “ Trocadéro ” to 20,000 blind soldiers, and it is in itself a tragic fact that 14,000 of these men were married to women who had come forward

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to marry them by reason of their calamity.

The third aspect of the new tragedy is the question whether the survivors will not see a world vastly inferior to that from which the most vital and energetic men have been taken? The question now before us is whether we shall allow the world that will exist after the war to be worse than the world as it was before the war?

Probably we shall not throw overboard our ideas about the desirability of prolonging human life, for this is, after all, nothing more than an effort to reduce the element of waste in human life. On the other hand, more stress will undoubtedly be laid on the desirability of abolishing human pain and misery, and making life, such as it is, better worth living. From this point of view there will probably be an altered standard of values. It is difficult to suppose that the men who come back from the front will think as rigidly as most English people do, or did, of what passes under the name of

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“euthanasia.” They have seen the torture that is caused by certain wounds when no morphia is at hand. There was a particular case of a man who passed eight hours in the tortured convulsions of tetanus in the trenches. During all that time he implored those round him to shoot him and put an end to his misery, and most of them would certainly have done so but for being restrained by a pious officer who refused to allow this man any release from torture except on the assurance of a doctor, who could not be found, that the man could not possibly recover. It is difficult for an optimist to believe that such ideas as those in which the officer was educated will permanently survive this war.

Generally speaking, the new feeling that life is short and uncertain, which brings us so much nearer to the outlook of our ancestors than anything else could do, will probably prove a stimulant. If life is short and uncertain then there is all the more

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reason to compress all we can into it. This quickened impulse of improving the world, as we find it, within the compass of the individual life, will certainly accelerate the intolerance of taboos which, although only half accepted by the community, enormously interfere with human progress and happiness. It is, for instance, difficult to suppose that after this war the problems of marriage and divorce, and of certain diseases which have not been adequately dealt with for fear of pious prejudices, will not be tackled in quite a different spirit by the surviving generation.

It is, perhaps, also not too optimistic to suppose that a tremendous collective effort will be made to minimize the chances of future wars. In so far as this war has been caused by the mere existence of a despotic monarchy, the mere existence of despotic monarchy is, or ought to be, jeopardized. In so far as this war has been caused by militarist propaganda in Germany, the

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propagandists must in future be treated as enemies of the human race. Those who preach universal tolerance have always rightly maintained that truth is great and will prevail; but the process by which it is made to prevail may be unduly expensive, and if ever force can be justly invoked it is to suppress the doctrines of Bernhardi.

HISTORY AND MORALS

IN an old number of the *Independent Review* Mr. John Pollock recorded the fact that the late Lord Acton described Bismarck as "a great man and a great scoundrel," and Lord Nelson as "an infamous man." These remarks were made in private conversation ; but in his inaugural lecture on the Study of History, delivered to historical students at Cambridge in 1895, Lord Acton wrote : "I exhort you never to debase the moral currency or to lower the standard of rectitude, but to try others by the final maxim that governs your own lives, and to suffer no man and no cause to escape the undying

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penalty which history has the power to inflict on wrong."

In this same lecture Lord Acton also quoted from Burke words that might have been his own. These are the words : " My principles enable me to form my judgment upon men and actions, just as they do in common life ; and are not formed out of events or characters, either present or past. History is a preceptor of prudence, not principles. The principles of true politics are those of morality enlarged ; and I neither do now, nor ever will admit any other." This is edifying enough ; Burke and Lord Acton were entitled to express their principles either in the pulpit, the House of Commons, or the arm-chair, but it would seem to follow from the above citations that in Lord Acton's opinion such principles should be preached by the historian to his readers. We do not expect political economists, art-critics, mathematicians, physicists, or publicists to com-

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municate to us their moral principles. Carlyle, Ruskin, and other Victorian writers did so *ad nauseam* ; but the more permanent part of their work is surely that which is least mixed up with the moralities. Is it too much to ask of the historian that he should understand and explain human affairs with as little commentary as possible ? Lord Acton himself did not invariably practise what he preached. Nothing could be more admirably fair and scientific than his introduction to Mr. Burd's edition of Machiavelli's "Il Principe." Mr. Pollock himself did not think it his duty to moralize much in his book on the Popish Plot. But the enunciation of the theory is dangerous in countries like England and the United States, where the public are plagued enough already by the introduction of ethical irrelevancies into every department of thought.

Most of us remember the history books of our childhood, in which monarchs and

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presidents were almost invariably classified as good or bad. Virtuous indignation may help to support the great fabric of social respectability; but it is hardly necessary to pitchfork it into the region of scholarship. The historian is, no doubt, incapable of strict neutrality in his judgments. The personal equation is too strong and the flesh is weak. He may well be allowed an explosive epithet or two in describing the proceedings of a Nero or a Torquemada; but it is quite another matter for him to suspend or modify his narrative or exposition in order to pronounce a series of ethical judgments. Such judgments are purely irrelevant to the matter he has in hand; and, even if they are not, the reader is not less likely to botch telegrams or commit adultery because the historian tells him that it is wrong to do so. The business of the historian is to obtain his facts and to explain how they are related in the chain of cause and effect.

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In the words of two great historians, M. Langlois and M. Seignobos: "Les goûts personnels ou le patriotisme peuvent créer des préférences pour des personnages sympathiques ou des événements locaux; mais le seul principe de choix qui puisse être commun à tous les historiens c'est le rôle joué dans l'évolution des choses humaines."

The psychology of human beings is part, and perhaps the most complex part, of the historian's material. But we want to know why Titus Oates perjured himself, not to what extent his perjury should be condemned by good men. It may, no doubt, be relevant to dwell upon the dark side of his earlier record, since his acts to some extent affect the credibility of his statements; but it seems difficult to see why the historian should go further.

The question is important in another way. Supposing an historian were to adopt Lord Acton's conception of his *métier*, and were

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deliberately to work himself up into a becomingly austere frame of mind, is he more or less likely to possess a correct insight into human motives ? If we are perplexed in our estimate of another person, and the character of that person vitally affects our own affairs, whom do we commonly consult ? Should we not prefer the judgment of a "man of the world" to that of a philosopher, a divine, or an itinerant preacher ? A doctor, or lawyer, acting in his professional capacity, makes it his first object to understand the persons he has to deal with, however strongly he may be inclined on his purely human side to approve or disapprove their respective virtues and vices. Why should not the historian aim at following this example ?

If we consider the qualities of really great historical work, we find that at its best it is an explanation of human affairs and not the condemnation of human weaknesses. Most readers will prefer Carlyle's admirable

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description of Prussia in the time of Frederick the Great to his dithyrambic denunciations of the French Revolution. In the one case he explains and in the other he rants.

The supreme English historian is Edward Gibbon; surely we must appreciate his admirable disinclination to moralize. His irony is often an indirect commentary, yet it is also a model of historical narrative. He has the true detachment of the philosophic spectator, not the frenzied vision of Exeter Hall. He has, no doubt, a distinct bias—that is inevitable—but his business is the relation of events in their natural chain of cause and effect, not the distortion of them to point a moral. The historian is not required to call things by wrong names. The late Sir Leslie Stephen, in discussing the English Restoration plays, remarked that some of them appeared to be written “by blackguards for blackguards.” We may differ as to the expression used; but the

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remark is made to explain the interaction of society and literature, not to enforce the proposition that immoral plays are deserving of censure.

We learn more of Bismarck if we try to understand his point of view than if we dwell on his want of scruple. It is more important to realize the heroic qualities of Lord Nelson than to reflect how much more respectable he would have been if he had lived happily with his wife.

Lord Acton's theory is, in reality, part and parcel of the theology which has found it necessary to create an "Index Expurgatorius." It betrays the cloven hoof of the theologian. The Catholic theologian knows that men are naturally sinful, and that their essential concern in this world is not the acquisition of profane knowledge, but of eternal happiness. If they are to read history at all, they must be told what is right and what is wrong, lest they should be perverted by

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evil examples. That is not a theory which is in itself likely to gain much hold on a Protestant country; but the common tendency to virtuous indignation is quite strong enough without being reinforced by such notions of history as this.

I remember once seeing in the *Spectator* a review of a serious book on the recent history of the American drama by a well-known American writer. The reviewer disclaimed all interest in the subject, but added that one thing chiefly struck him: "Mr. — demands no moral judgments, either from the audience, the playwright, or the actors. This may be true; but if it is, religion is false." We surely cannot wish history to be written in this vein.

In his first inaugural lecture Lord Acton wrote that *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner* was a dangerous maxim for the historian to act upon, because it might tempt him to excuse the crimes of historical characters.

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The historian is not, however, concerned to condemn or to excuse. Even if he were, it is much easier to fall into the snare of denunciation than of palliation.

There are many types of virtuous indignation. The young are intolerant through undeveloped sympathies and ignorance of the world. Idle mobs at criminal trials "compound for sins that they've inclined to" by vociferously "damning those they have no mind to." The squire contemplates the poacher in as righteous a mood as the magistrate sentences some unfortunate for having attempted to commit suicide.

Such emotions do not, however, conduce to enlightenment, and when, as in the case of German historians, they assume a patriotic form they are highly dangerous. It needs but a superficial acquaintance with the German, and particularly the Prussian, historians of the nineteenth century to observe the appalling consequences of an intellectual

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prostitution which could only end in propagating the gospel of *Kultur*. It is only too characteristic of Lord Acton's generation that he should have coupled the names of Nelson and Bismarck!

TEUTONS AND LATINS

THERE are pestilent people still about who bisect Europe into Teutons and Latins, entirely omitting the Iberians, Scandinavians, Celts, and other races. Ever since the arrival of the Prince Consort in England and the fungoid multiplication of a certain group of historians in Oxford, we have been told that the Teutons had all the virtues, and the Latins all the vices, of Europe, just as since the war the Harmsworth hacks have done nothing but insist on the "mysticism" of the modern Frenchman and the "artistic instincts" of the modern Italian.*

* The modern Frenchman is anything but "mystical," and the modern Italian is eminently scientific.

TEUTONS AND LATINS

As a matter of fact, the English are, like most successful races, mongrels. England started with a Celtic foundation, on the top of which came Frisian tribes. The country was twice civilized—once by the Romans and again by the Normans—and we have had a good sprinkling of Danish, Flemish, and French elements. Even had we been purely Teutonic to start with, our insular position, our “Celtic fringe,” and our world-wide connections would have saved us from the extravagances of the pure Teuton, if such a thing exists.

Again, we must allow for the fact that modern Germany has centred round Berlin instead of round Vienna, as medieval Germany at her best did, and the hideous breed of Prussian is due to a very unhappy mixture of Slav and some other tribes on the Baltic coast. It is the result of promiscuous rape and slaughter carried on for several centuries by the Teutonic knights.

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So far as England is concerned the mere citation of such a line as :

“ The multitudinous seas incarnadine ”

indicates a very happy marriage of Latin and Saxon. We have in our language contrived to preserve just that sense of form which does distinguish the Latin from the Teuton. Mommsen wrote that all Latin literature was rhetoric ; but the Latin language is at least clear, forcible, and beautiful, which is more than can be said for Mommsen's own language. And if the Latin writers are frequently rhetorical they avoid with native success the bombastic and question-begging cacophony which has afflicted students of German literature for the last forty years.

It is true that during that same period we have had to put up with a marked Teutonic influence on our literature and manners. The writings of Coleridge, Carlyle, Meredith,

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and the later works of Vernon Lee are all painful examples of the vogue that German models produced on the minds of an earlier generation, which suddenly thought it smart to learn German and to imitate the German contortion of language. In manners we have the "strong, silent man," who has fortunately declined since the early nineties. His origins can clearly be traced to the insufferable formality of Coburg customs which replaced the delightful accessibility of the English Court during the reigns of the later Georges and William IV. Our country was, indeed, fortunate to experience the reaction of Edward VII to the older and saner ideals of the English gentleman with a taste for France. He was at least free from the anxiety that tortured his mother when she feared that Bulwer Lytton might step on to the rug reserved for none but royal feet after dinner.

There is a considerable danger of all this

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Teutonophil nonsense becoming more virulent than ever after the war. We shall be told that the Teuton is not merely our cousin, but our brother, and was only led astray by the wicked Hohenzollern, though, in fact, the Kaiser has always been detested whenever he was identified with a policy of peace. And we shall also be told that the Latin is hard-hearted, unchaste, atheistic, and volatile. We shall be invited to admire the duty and discipline and sentimental outpourings of the Teuton. Europe will be flooded with pseudo-Swiss waiters and prostitutes, who will no doubt acquire British nationality and a vote whenever they can. There may be even more copious contributions of Teutonic money to the party funds.

It is, therefore, all the more necessary to remind ourselves that the English are *English* and not Teutons, that we are to-day the trustees of civilization as the Romans were before us, and that the disintegration

TEUTONS AND LATINS

of Europe by the descendants of those who broke up the Roman Empire must entail the return of ages far darker than those which are commonly called "dark."

In conclusion, there is one point which is supposed to unite us with Germany, and that is the Protestant religion. "Grand old Martin Luther" and Frederick the Great have been held up as our Protestant heroes. In this respect I think the Germans damaged Europe very badly. The Catholic Church took over part of the civilization of the Roman Empire. Europe had a certain international spirit before the Reformation which it has lost ever since. On such questions as international diplomacy or private domestic institutions like marriage there was a certain tradition common to Europe. I, at least, follow Goethe in thinking that Europe would have been a much better place if the party of Erasmus had overcome the Lutherans. We should have been spared the Jesuits on the one hand

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and the Calvinists on the other. We might have achieved in the seventeenth century a certain humanism of which we barely see traces in the twentieth. Here again (as it seems to me) the Germans for the second time put the clock back several centuries. But so long as our vain adulation of Protestant ideas continues we shall be told to admire Martin Luther and his friends, whose influence produced nothing better than the Thirty Years War in Germany, an Erastian Church in England, the abomination and desolation of Calvinism elsewhere, and the growth of a Catholicism which seems to me inferior to what came before it.

The human and intellectual issues of the present war are equally grave and the best chances of modern Europe are still in the melting-pot.

CONTINENTAL ENGLAND

WE must be prepared to find England quite Continental after the war. What a joy it was before 1914 to see the white cliffs of our mystical island, and to know that on reaching them one would handle gold coins, strike large and efficient matches, encounter amiable and incurious Custom House officials, see the dingy public houses, read church or chapel newspapers, and forget that we had anything but a navy to defend our shores. But now the future traveller will have his luggage as thoroughly ransacked here as he ever did in France or Italy; he will find the same sort of continental café as he left behind, though

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perhaps with strictly indoor accommodation; he will read definitely anti-clerical newspapers, and see signs of a standing army wherever he goes. We shall have assimilated continental ideals and models—perhaps even in our marriage laws. We shall enjoy simple pleasures, not waste our food, have our journals printed on the sort of paper we used to find on the Continent, anxiously regard the sputtering match, and keep up a standing army in order to stave off the possible attacks of our European debtors. If, in fact, we cross the channel from France, it will probably be by a tunnel, and we shall find appetizing things to eat instead of the so-called tea and the ancient buns which used to welcome us home.

Let us hope we shall like it. Some of us may then hanker for pre-war England, with all her ramshackle associations of liberty, disorganization, granite confectionery, dirty taverns, free trade, and

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sentimental insularity. I suppose we ought not to complain. We shall lead a simpler life, and waste less in goods and money. We shall be more aware of facts, and not bury our faces in the sand of illusions. Our politicians will be to us no more than a French Deputy is to a Frenchman. Our Christmas will be denuded of the Christmas tree which the Prince Consort imported from Coburg. Our plum puddings will be less substantial. Our beer will be brewed under some sort of bureaucratic control. Our religion, or whatever remains of it, will be strictly undenominational; and the mystical latitudes of the Broad Church will vanish in our clearer vision of reality.

“The old order changeth;” but then it has always changed very slowly in England. Now we are to have a “quick change.” All our young men have been either bureaucrats or soldiers. They will be less tolerant of amiable incompetence. They will have

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more of what was vilely christened "push and go." They will be inclined to do away with contemplative indolence. They will not put up with individual eccentricities. There may be much worse tendencies. The use of the "nark" both in khaki and in mufti may become normal to our police as it never was before. Already our railway officials treat travellers like cattle. Passengers are locked into their particular sections of a corridor train, and herded into large, dark rooms without being allowed to approach their train till it arrives—quite in the continental style—and many of the ticket collectors adopt manners which are military in Germany but not in England.

Perhaps we shall be better off; but we shall lose a good deal. There has always been a certain mystical geniality in English life—perhaps better expressed by Dickens than by any other English writer. There has always been a pleasant eccentricity

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among us of the sort that we find in the autobiographies of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer as well as in the "Pickwick Papers." There has been a devil-may-care happy-go-luckiness which one can remember enjoying in old boatmen and innkeepers and farmers.

Instead of all this, we shall have alertness and efficiency and caution. The national character will change—perhaps radically—and we shall become more intelligent and less amiable. If we do, it will not be our fault. We came into the war to avenge the oppressed and vindicate international law. The great neutral world was tardy and grudging in appreciation and sympathy. If we treat that world less generously than before by reason of poverty and hardship, it will have no right to complain. But whatever changes may come, let us hope that Lord Nelson's words will never lose their force: "Hitherto there has been nothing greater known on

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the Continent than the faith, the untarnished honour, the generous public sympathies, the high diplomatic influence, the commerce, the power, the valour of the British Nation.”

THE END



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